

U.S. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
Transcript of National Archives History Office Oral History interview
Subject: Susan Cummings
Interviewer: Rebecca Brenner
Date: June 29, 2015

[START RECORDING]

MS. REBECCA BRENNER: This is Rebecca Brenner, today's date is June 29, 2015, and I am conducting an oral history interview of Susan Cummings on her second to last day at the National Archives.

MS. SUSAN CUMMINGS: Thank you.

MS. BRENNER: Thank you. Could you start by telling me some background about your education and how you got to NARA?

MS. CUMMINGS: That's a story in and of itself. I actually have a Master's degree in classical archeology from Indiana University, but as I was approaching my Master's degree, my Mom got sick and I needed to come home. But it actually worked out just as well, I choose not to go on for my Ph.D. because then I would have to study something like animal motifs on red figured pottery of the 3rd century, of the 3rd quarter of the 5th century B.C. So, I got home to Maryland, I'm a native Marylander in the Northeast part, north of Bel Air, and I had to start looking for a job. So, I went to the YWCA job fair and they said, well here's a job for an archivist at the Maryland State Archives, is that what I do? And I said, sure. And I went for a job interview, and surprise, surprise, they hired me. And I was there for a little over 12 years and I started looking around to get a job at the National Archives. I needed to go back to school and take some history credits because NARA had the history requirement to be an archivist, and I had plenty of history, just I didn't have five courses in American History. So, I went to the community college, got my history and applied and got a job at the Washington National Records Center in 1994.

MS. BRENNER: Wow. What were your first impressions of NARA when you came here?

MS. CUMMINGS: Well let me tell you about the Maryland State Archives first. The Maryland State Archives was founded, was started in 1935, earlier than the National Archives, and Maryland has wonderful records going back to 1635. So, we thought, we're a little proud of our history at the Maryland State Archives. The job I happened to get here at the National Archives was at Suitland at the Washington National Records Center, and it kind-of took me by surprise. Number one, I was working in a records center, not in an archives, and it really made a difference. Also, at that point in 1994, the National Archives was still using typewriters and I came from the Maryland State Archives, where we were already putting our inventories into computers. There were some computers at the National Archives, but they were really being used by the records centers, not by the archives.

And when I got to Suitland in 1994, they were in the middle of the move to this new building, to Archives II, which opened in 1994, so I was part of moving, I don't remember how many, but it was something like, I don't remember how many thousands, hundreds of thousands of cubic feet of records from the records center here to Archives II. For us in the records center it was a little bit easier because we could print things out because we had a data point system that we had inventory control over our records. At that point Suitland had two halves, one side was records center, the other side was overflow

for the archives, and they were typing the box list for the records to come to the new archives. So, what struck me is just because you're the National Archives didn't mean you were the most up to date technologically.

The other thing I really was struck by is size does make a difference, because at the Maryland State Archives we were, of course, much smaller, and everybody was on a first name basis and although we certainly had a hierarchy, we all worked together almost as if we were one. When I came to the National Archives there was a real distinction between, not your supervisor, my supervisor was Judy Barnes who still works here, she was very opening and friendly, but as you started going higher up there was definitely a chain of command that needed to be followed more than I was used to.

MS. BRENNER: Did you, speaking of supervisors, did you have any mentors early on?

MS. CUMMINGS: Well, I've been very fortunate, I've had great supervisors and they've all taught me something. Judy is very practical and Judy, if you give Judy a challenge, she'll first say, no it can't be done, but then she'll figure out how to make it happen. Just very down to earth, practical, and not so much theoretical, but just, this is what we have to get done. Who else?

Lori Lisowski who was my supervisor when I was in Policy and Planning staff. Lori has a reputation for being very tough at the National Archives, but she is the one who made the connection for me between the strategic plan and the work that we do. Everything that we did had to be linked to the strategic plan. And that became a very clear, kind-of, is this the right thing to do, or not the right thing to do if it matches with the strategic plan.

MS. BRENNER: And could you clarify what's a strategic plan, what does that mean in this context?

MS. CUMMINGS: Well I guess most organizations do some soul searching to start with. They figure out why do they exist, what are they supposed to be doing. For those of us in government, it can be clear because our mission and what we're supposed to be doing is defined by law and by regulation. So, then a strategic plan says, okay, this is the basis, this is what we're supposed to be doing, what are our goals and how are we going to get there? So, you establish goals, as far as I know there are usually 4 or 5 goals, and then you establish pathways, or initiatives to get you there.

MS. BRENNER: When you first got to the National Archives, what kind-of training did you receive?

MS. CUMMINGS: It was very much hands on, person-to-person, kind-of training. I don't remember at first going to any training classes, although I was sent to some national conferences and in my experience at the National Archives, up till the recent budget problems, NARA was very good about sending people to a professional conference, maybe once a year, and then sometimes maybe something else that you're interested in as well.

MS. BRENNER: Which conferences have you attended? Which ones have you liked, can you speak more to the conferences?

MS. CUMMINGS: Well for archivists, the main one is the SAA, the Society of American Archivists annual conference. It's our colleagues, it's our professionals, traditionally it's a lot of private corporations and academic, a lot of academic. In the last five years or so they've recognized they have a lot of government archivists too, so they actually are doing more to take advantage of that knowledge that we have, and the increase in that population.

We also around the country have local archival groups, I'm a member of MARAC the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference. Today people tend to go more to, they go to those, but they also do more technical things like IT conferences and yes, that's it.

MS. BRENNER: What successes come to mind when you think of your time here?

MS. CUMMINGS: I have one major thing I'm really proud of, I know there are other things I've been involved in as well, but I'd like to talk about the records management initiatives. And I did prepare some documentation that you can take with you if that would be helpful.

MS. BRENNER: Absolutely.

MS. CUMMINGS: Back in 1998 the Deputy Archivist, Lou Bellardo brought together a group of people to look at the scheduling and appraisal process. Scheduling and appraisal is the way that NARA works with agencies to identify what records are permanent and should eventually come to the National Archives, and what other records can be disposed of when the agency is finished using them.

In the early '90s NARA had a backlog, they weren't getting the schedules processed and approval as quickly as the agencies wanted. Another tidbit of information there is that a Federal agency cannot destroy any records without the permission of the Archivist of the United States. And the way the Archivist gives that permission is by approving a record schedule, a request for a records disposition authority. Meaning, how long does that record need to be kept for the agency? Is it of enough value to be permanently valuable and come to the National Archives?

So, we were not keeping up with the backlog, and so we got a lot of complaints from the agencies, so the Deputy Archivist in 1998 brought together a group of people to do a business process reengineering, a BPR on scheduling and appraisal. And I was fortunate enough to be one of the people included in that.

And we worked on it for about a year, doing research, coming up with some ideas and working on the business process, reengineering. We actually had a very bad contractor for that, and it caused a lot of problems for us, and it just got to be, no one was happy with where we were and where we were going. So, the Archivist, John Carlin with Lou Bellardo the Deputy, said "stop, we're going to rethink this." And the team dispersed, went back to their home units, and then about, that would have been 1999, a new initiative was announced, which came to be known as the Records Management Initiatives, or RMI. And at that point I was working in NPOL, the policy and planning staff. And my permanent assignment was to work with the Deputy Archivist on the RMI, and this was so cool, we had a multiple approach to gathering information from a number of sources.

So, to backtrack just a little bit, what the Archivist and Deputy said was, we can't focus just on scheduling an appraisal. That is one important, but one small part of records management in the entire Federal government. We need to understand what's happening to records management in the 21st century. It was the 20th century, but we were thinking 21st century.

So, in the RMI we hired a contractor who went out and interviewed General Counsel, Chief Information Officers, about what their needs and wishes were for records management. Our own staff did a series of 12 records systems analysis, which basically means we identified 12 different work processes in the Federal Government: passport application, border patrol policy, the mine safety administration. The agencies volunteered. We went out and looked at a single work process that was key to their mission

and we studied exactly what they were doing, what records were created, were the records being captured, and how did the people doing the work feel about records? What was absolutely great about this process was what we found out is that the Federal employees—I'm very big into protecting and standing up for Federal employees—they get a bad rap, but what this project showed us is that almost every single Federal employee we interviewed and worked with was proud of what they did, kept the records because they knew it was important.

We had veterans, VA employees whose job was working on veterans' benefits, which is kind-of an echo of today, isn't it? They cared about those veterans and them getting their work. So, we did all this and we went to public interest groups, we did a lot of data collection, brought it together and with a contractor's help, we wrote a report about what we found. And then with that report the Deputy Archivist with some key senior leaders at the National Archives, our CIO at the time who was Ren Cahoon, our Head of Records Management, Mike Miller, and Tom Mills who at that point was Head of the Office of Regional Records Services.

We took that information and brainstormed and came up with a whole set of goals and strategies and tactics and measures of success. And that first document is called Strategic Directions for Federal Records Management. And I'm very proud of that work, to have been the Deputy's primary assistant on that, and the link with the staff and the contractor. When you look at the 27, I think, 25 tactics that we came up with, many of them are actually key to what we're doing now in the modern records program. And under Paul Wester and other leaders, NARA is at a really critical point working with the Office of Management and Budget, and the administration to get electronic records under control, get the records in here, helping the agencies manage their own records, and a lot of the things they're doing come straight out of this paper. Like expanding our general records schedules, which are the way we get more schedules, we get more records scheduled quickly, without having a lot of one-on-one on them.

MS. BRENNER: Could you speak to the immediate results of the RMI versus its legacy now?

MS. CUMMINGS: The immediate results, well that's interesting because as I recall, there wasn't a lot of jumping up and down and cheering for it. During the process, again, people thought it was perhaps taking away time from their regular work, you know, getting their own work done. Also, with those records systems analysis I talked about, the RSAs, the appraisal archivist said we'll never have time to do this again. It's really not a good learning tool for us in the future.

Once we came out with the strategic directions and the Archivist and Deputy Archivist really started trying to implement some of these tactics, like flexible scheduling. Flexible scheduling means it was expanding the general records schedules, it was also creating big bucket schedules. Big bucket schedules is a way of putting different kinds of records, but related records, putting them all together and scheduling them once, as opposed to taking each type of record and scheduling that. People didn't like that. They resented it; they thought it was not professional—it was taking away from their knowledge and their authority.

MS. BRENNER: You mentioned a certain attitude that people have about Federal employees, versus their attitude about the work that you do, could you speak a little more to that? That was really interesting.

MS. CUMMINGS: Okay. So, with those records systems analysis and every day when either the appraisal archivist or the people at Suitland, at the Federal Records Center, talk to people in Federal agencies, people always want to do the right thing. They care about the work they're doing. They care about doing it to the best of their ability, but also being aware of the budget and tax payer dollars being spent. So, again, I'm really proud to be a Federal employee and to know that this is a service. It's Federal service, and nobody went into Federal service to get rich. A few of us managed to get higher grades and do okay, but that's not why we went into it.

MS. BRENNER: And that transitions perfectly into my next question. What aspects of the work do you enjoy?

MS. CUMMINGS: Well, the cliché, I'm a people person, so I always like the part where I'm interacting either with my colleagues, or with the people at the Federal agencies, or our customers, our researchers. Either online or I've worked more with the people who come into the actual research rooms.

In one of my lives here I was the Director of Access Programs, that's pre-transformation. And so, I would get involved as there were problems, and sometimes when there were praise. When we had visitors, people wanting tours, I got to do that and I love that.

MS. BRENNER: For clarification, could you just go through the different positions that you've held here and describe what they were?

MS. CUMMINGS: Sure.

MS. BRENNER: Kind-of like an oral resume. Or, you have a paper.

MS. CUMMINGS: I wrote down all my different careers here. As I mentioned, I started out at the Washington National Records Center, and I was there for about three years. And then I actually came to this office, 3600, where we are, which at that time was the Office of Regional Records Service, and I helped send information out to our regional facilities about record schedules.

From there I was chosen for the Policy and Planning staff, which was affectionately known as NPOL. NPOL was not well loved in the agency, it was seen as the office that just said no, because everything had, at that point, that's under John Carlin's time period and Lori Lisowski was the Head of NPOL or Policy and Planning. And there were tight reigns on how things got done. It was very much, as I mentioned, everything had to track to the strategic plan, and to make that happen there was a process that many things had to go through NPOL to be approved.

And there was a lot of resentment to that and push back, particularly in the office that was doing records management policy. They hated to be second-guessed and questioned about what they as the experts were developing.

I actually liked my days in NPOL a great deal, I got along with Lori and with the staff and I think we accomplished a great deal. Again, we became, I thought, more professional in that regard, that everything followed a process.

From NPOL it was kind-of like divine retribution, I went from the office that set policy down to the office that had to implement the policy. So, I went down to the modern records program—that's the records

administration part of the National Archives and Records Administration. It's the outward looking, working with the agencies, we talked about the records management initiatives, all the things that when I was in NPOL we came up with these great ideas, then I ended up down in records management where we had to implement them.

From there Michael Kurtz who is the Assistant Archivist for Records Services, Washington, DC, asked me to become the Head of Access Programs. Access Programs basically was all the custodial units here in the Washington DC-area. This date must be wrong, maybe not, but I was there for maybe three years and then we had the great transformation of 2011, which reorganized the National Archives. And in that reorganization Access Programs went away, and the custodial units, the records part of the National Archives across all of our facilities, our archives, became Research Services.

Bill Mayer eventually became the executive for Research Services, but it took them awhile to fill that job. A number of us applied for the job, including myself. It was the worst interview I've ever given. I took it as a sign that I wasn't supposed to have that job.

MS. BRENNER: What was so bad about the interview before you continue?

MS. CUMMINGS: It was like I didn't show up that day. The questions were fine, they were what you would expect for that level of position, but I just wasn't there. I couldn't think of anything and it was almost like my mind went blank. And obviously I've had lots of jobs, I've done many interviews before, but there was something that day that just stopped me.

So, I don't necessarily believe in fate, but I didn't get the job, we'll say that. And they didn't hire anybody the first time or the second time. It was a year after the transformation before they hired Bill Mayer. I don't think he applied the first couple times, I don't know that but I know the Archivist was doing a lot of outreach to try to find people because my understanding is the Archivist wanted somebody exciting and somebody who was really forward-looking for that position.

Because our custodial units, Research Services, are so burdened by paper, you know? We have so many billions of pieces of paper that it's sometimes hard to get your head up out of the paper and realize, wait a minute, there's all that electronic records coming, oh and there's social media over here. So, the Archivist was looking, he looked at everybody, but he was really looking for somebody with new ideas from the outside. And so, it was in 2012 I think when he hired Bill Mayer who came in for Research Services.

But as a result of the transformation, oh, and Bill, the way transformation left what became Research Services is the world was divided into five regions, or five entities called "access coordinators." And what I used to be in charge of, Access Programs, here in DC, actually became RD, Research Services Washington DC. And Bill, for all the access coordinators, the five access coordinators, Bill of course did interviews and when things settled out, I didn't get the job.

Bill was absolutely wonderful to me and kept me in Research Services. I became at some point called the Coordinator for Policy and Planning. But Bill was a different, is a different manager than Michael Kurtz was. He's much more hands on, he doesn't need or use an office staff except for the secretary, even that he does he own, a lot of his own correspondence, and one person to help him with technical things. The rest of us kind of sat up in 3400 with nothing to do.

So, I wasn't bitter, but I was in a bad place, because I didn't have work to do. I was a GS-15 with a great deal of success, but I had no work to do. So, I was biding my time, thinking about retirement, and one day Jay Trainer who is the executive for Agency Services, came over and asked if would I be interested in being his Chief of Staff. And again, I don't believe in fate, but this is what was supposed to happen, because I actually kind-of came back to where I started. Because the Records Centers, Washington National Records Center, are under Agency Services, the Modern Records Program is under Agency Services, and other units I've worked with. So, to be Chief of Staff here was great because I knew a lot of the processes and I was also already friends with many, many of the people.

And you asked me what kinds of things I'm most proud of, and I think my ability and my wanting to work so closely with the people as individuals and as units, was certainly one of my strengths, and this job lets me do that.

MS. BRENNER: Can you, you keep transitioning perfectly into the next thing on my cheat sheet.

MS. CUMMINGS: Glad I can help.

MS. BRENNER: Which I don't always stick to but can you describe a typical day in your unit? So, this one.

MS. CUMMINGS: As Chief of Staff there are certain things that I do or coordinate. Policy, for instance, when NARA is developing new policy and it has to be vetted by the different offices, I get involved with that. I've been the coordinator for so many of the initiatives that come and hopefully go, like plain language and hiring exceptions. And another big area is internal controls. NARA has in the last couple of years really invigorated its internal controls program, so I coordinate those reports with the five programs within Agency Services. And, oh, strategic planning. What are we going to do next year, what are we going to do the year after that—I work with the five program offices and Agency Services on that.

And then I'm just here whenever something comes up. So, I'm on the National Safety and Health Committee. And it was really important to be active in that because most of the accidents happen in the Records Centers, so I wanted to be part of the group that was looking at, okay, we need to work on ladder safety, we need to get better ladders. We need to train people. This year in 2015 the emphasis is on lifting, so how do we get the videos and the training out to the people? I've also been involved in the continuity of operations planning as well.

MS. BRENNER: What are some accidents that have happened, increase the need for that?

MS. CUMMINGS: Well, as it turned out, we had bought ladders some time ago, I don't remember how many years ago, that had a flaw in the welding. So, as people were stepping on the ladder with a box that weighs 50-60 pounds, the step would break, so people would fall off the ladder with the box.

We also have bad habits. When you work in the Records Center sometimes you know you could just kind-of climb up one or two steps, or one or two shelves and put that box on the shelf. The shelves aren't designed to be climbed on.

MS. BRENNER: That sounds terrifying.

MS. CUMMINGS: Yes. When I first started at Suitland, I didn't have ladder training, and the shelving is 15 feet tall, the ladders are 15 feet tall, except you're not supposed to stand on the top one and I kind-of

did to get the box where it needed to go, and I was scared to death and then I realized later, that was the wrong thing to do.

MS. BRENNER: Oh, my goodness.

MS. CUMMINGS: Yeah. So, I could have been one of those statistics.

MS. BRENNER: A theme that's come up, moving away from dangers in the Archives, a theme that's come up repeatedly is the transition to newer technologies in the 21st century and more digitization of records and then also records that come in digitally that were never on paper. Can you speak to technological changes over the course of your time at NARA?

MS. CUMMINGS: Well, as I mentioned, when I started at the National Archives, I was shocked by the lack of technology on the archives side. The Record Center, because of the volume of records and the constant movement, in the Records Centers records come in, they can be pulled back, they can come in again. And at Suitland alone we were talking about 20 stack areas, each the size of a football field, each holding 200,000 cubic feet of records. So, the need to have inventory control was paramount. So, they had the data point system that tracked that.

And then the computers started coming in at that point, and we did our work, we switched to the PCs for tracking records and accessions coming and going, being either transferred or destroyed. Let's see, I can't think of anything else right away between my time here and our central office, and then when I went to NPOL, it's pretty much, I just remember PC use as we do it now.

But when I went down to Records Management, and as we were trying to really promote ourselves to the Federal agencies and the requirements and the best practices and getting them out, at that point we had an annual conference called the Records Administration Conference, or RACO. And we would get 600 people to come to this conference. And as part of the PR we wanted to do a blog, and NARA didn't accept blogs, NARA didn't do any blogs, there were legal restrictions, there were technology restrictions, so I actually was one of the forces behind pushing through the changes that needed to happen with legal requirements and security requirements so that to promote RACO, this conference, I actually wrote NARA's very first blog. I was NARA's first blogger. I can't say that I've been extremely active since then.

MS. BRENNER: I have a blog post coming out tomorrow.

MS. CUMMINGS: Do you? Excellent. Excellent. And now it's such a part of what we do.

MS. BRENNER: What was the response to the first blog post ever?

MS. CUMMINGS: There was more of an excitement that we did it, you know? It was not that big a deal in terms of content, but we did get it out to agencies and they saw it. It was really a big deal because our head of security was really anti-doing it. And then the lawyers, I forget what you call it, but there's a whole bunch of legal requirements for doing something like this, to use different software, or permissions and things like that. So, it was really a barrier that we broke through. And then it just kind-of exploded with people doing blogs.

MS. BRENNER: How do you view the progression of that online outreach?

MS. CUMMINGS: I think it's very critical. As we know, as I've been told and as we know, we reach far more people online than we do people walking through the door or even attending conferences. And I guess now we transitioned to digitization. I'm a real proponent of appropriate digitization. And I'll stop there on that.

MS. BRENNER: What exactly does that mean though? I'm supposed to ask clarification of terms.

MS. CUMMINGS: Of course. In our strategic plan it says we will digitize everything.

MS. BRENNER: Oh, okay.

MS. CUMMINGS: And if we accept that that is a stretch goal, I'm perfectly content with it. I do know that we have many permanent records that should be the last thing we digitize, you know? There are limited resources and finances and we should certainly digitize the things that the public wants and asks for—the things we think they will want and ask for, but I'm not a proponent of digitize everything just because we can, because I don't think we can without perhaps taking our resources away from something else that's needed.

MS. BRENNER: What are the priorities for what to digitize? Like both in your opinion and with the strategic plan?

MS. CUMMINGS: I can't speak to what's in the strategic plan. I can speak to what I think the priorities are. I think our mission is to preserve the records that document citizen's rights, provide government accountability, and document the national experience. So those would be my priorities for what should be digitized.

The next priority would be what we know are going to be heavily used. Which, when you come down to it, is either citizen's rights or genealogy. They are the big drivers.

We have perhaps thousands of cubic feet of NEH grants, National Endowment for the Humanities grants, I don't really think we need to digitize them. We can digitize them on demand if somebody asks for them.

MS. BRENNER: What are, you've mentioned a few, but what are some challenges that you've faced here?

MS. CUMMINGS: Well, I will start by saying I've been very lucky in my career. I've had a wonderful set of jobs here, and I've learned something from everyone that I've worked with and everything that I did. I think change is always a challenge and NARA, like every Federal agency, goes through its reorganizations, starting in the Records Center in the '90s and up until, I don't know, after 2000 I think definitely into this millennium, there's definitely been a bias against the Record Centers. That the Record Center people are just manual labor. And there are a lot of good, hard working people out there who work in much worse conditions than anybody in this building does, and again, they take pride in their work and they were looked down on for a long time, and to some extent, still are. So that's one of my causes, to always support the Record Centers.

I think as a manager it's a challenge to be heard and not to be strident. I don't know if that's being a woman manager, or just being a manager that is not in the clique. In any organization cliques form for good and bad reasons. And if you're not in the clique, it's hard to have your voice heard. And if you're

not careful, you'll be viewed as a complainer. So, I have this rule that I've developed that I'll make my comment once, if it's not listened to, I don't think it's been heard, I'll make it twice, and then I do my very best to drop it after that.

But I also just believe, my personal philosophy has always been if the door opens, walk through it. So when I've had opportunities, I've taken them. And in all cases except possibly that move to Access Programs, it's really worked out well for me.

MS. BRENNER: Are there other changes that you've experienced over time at NARA other than the technological ones?

MS. CUMMINGS: Definitely. In the 90s when I started here and up until John Carlin, the archivists ruled the world. The people who worked in the archives, the archivists were the upper class. They were our elite and possibly the world revolved around them, because the records didn't mean anything until they got to them and they could share them with the world.

When John Carlin came in, he's the one who really said, we need to help the agencies, we need to make sure they're doing what they need to do, we're going to build up our records management programs. And he got funding from Congress to hire more archivists to do what was called targeted assistance, they were supposed to work with agencies, especially with electronic records. And at that point what's now the Modern Records Programs, AC, got more staff, they got higher grades, and more influence. And the archive side has never recovered or forgiven that to some extent.

MS. BRENNER: That's very interesting. Any other notable changes over time?

MS. CUMMINGS: Well, there's the big one, which comes back to digitization perhaps. The primacy of the web over in person research. Traditionally people come to the Archives to do research, and the focus and the attention was going to improve the experience of people who came into our buildings.

Now we have recognized and addressed that by really building up our web presence and having our digitization strategies to try to get records digitized and online and make doing research online more possible. So that's another major change.

MS. BRENNER: How do you view your time at the archives over all?

MS. CUMMINGS: I think what we do is so important, I think well, when I would teach classes, records management classes at Archives I, and in a break, I'd take some of the people who came from EPA or Agriculture, or whatever, and I was like, come with me. And we'd walk around the corner from the conference rooms, and there we were in the Rotunda. And there was the Constitution, the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. How cool is that, you know? I feel like I have ownership of that because it's our responsibility to take care of those. And then you have to realize that yes, those are our Charters of Freedom, but so many records today are being created that need to be taken care of and preserved. So maybe somebody there will be another Star Trek episode where they'll find an abandoned spacecraft and it will have a copy of, maybe it won't be the Constitution, but it will be some other declaration of rights or something, you know? Something really cool.

MS. BRENNER: That just gave me chills.

MS. CUMMINGS: Yeah.

MS. BRENNER: Thank you so much for your time.

MS. CUMMINGS: Oh, you're welcome.

MS. BRENNER: Congratulations again on your retirement.

MS. CUMMINGS: Thank you.

MS. BRENNER: And is there anything you would like to add to the interview, such as anecdotes, words of wisdom?

MS. CUMMINGS: I don't think so.

MS. BRENNER: Okay, well thank you again.

MS. CUMMINGS: Thank you, this was fun.

[END RECORDING]





NATIONAL
ARCHIVES

National Archives History Office
700 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington DC 20408
Tel: (202) 357-5243
Email: archives.historian@nara.gov

DEED OF GIFT TO THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

I, Susan Cummings do hereby give to the National Archives History Office the recordings and transcripts of my interviews conducted on 6/29/2015.

I authorize the National Archives History Office to use the recordings and transcripts in such a manner as may best serve the historical objectives of their oral history program.

In making this gift I voluntarily convey ownership of the recording and transcripts to the public domain.

[Signature]
Agent of Receiving Organization

[Signature]
Donor

6/29/2015
Date